

Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. announced today that he and his father, the Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., are filing a Freedom of Information Act request with the United States Secret Service for any and all documents related to the two of them. The legal actions follow reports that high-ranking Secret Service officials sent e-mail messages and jokes about a possible assassination of the Rev. Jackson and his wife, Mrs. Jacqueline Jackson.

"My family is deeply concerned and distressed by reports that federal law enforcement officials were disseminating information and anecdotes about a possible assassination of our father and mother. The Secret Service is charged with investigating threats, not initiating them," Jackson said.

Congressman Jackson continued, "These disturbing and derogatory e-mails suggesting that a missile striking an airplane carrying Reverend Jackson and Jacqueline Jackson 'wouldn't be an accident' is no laughing matter at all. To the contrary, we take this matter very seriously, and will pursue all avenues available under the law."

The comments about the Jacksons recently surfaced as part of an ongoing discrimination lawsuit filed by African American Secret Service agents against the federal agency, which is charged with protecting the president and other leaders as well as investigating threats against these protectees.